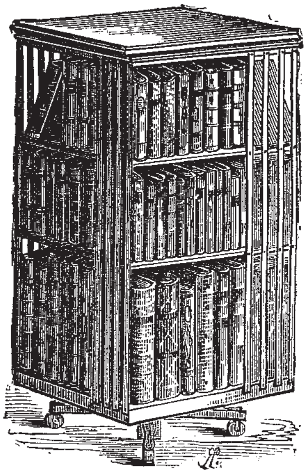
A ROTATING BOOK-CASE.

WE have received from Messrs. Trübner and Co. a book-case on a novel principle, the invention of an American, the introduction of which, into local museums would, we believe, be attended with considerable advantages. The accompanying woodcut will render a detailed description of it unnecessary, while the practical advantages of storing books in such a small space will be obvious to everybody. We draw attention to it not so much from its use in a private library, to the owners of which it will at once commend itself, as from the convenient manner in which books and specimens supplementing each other, may be arranged in close proximity. We believe that if in a museum geological books, for instance, were thus arranged by the side of the geological specimens, references to the former would be more often made than they are at present when they have to be consulted often in another room at a considerable distance away. Of course the more valuable books and the special memoirs should find their place in libraries as they exist at present, but a typical collection of books side by side with a typical collection of specimens such as this neat arrangement suggests would, we believe, form a novel feature which would be greatly appreciated by many students. The four sides of the rotating book-case also afford a capital means of dividing the subjects as well as saving space, almost to as great an extent as the rotating case for art illustrations introduced by Sir Henry Cole into the South Kensington Museum.



FAUSTINUS JOVITA MARIANUS MALAGUTI

WE are called upon to chronicle a new loss to French science in the death, on April 24, of the well-known chemist Prof. Malaguti. He was born in Bologna February 15, 1802, his father being a pharmaceutical chemist. At the age of sixteen he completed the course in pharmacy at the Bologna University, and undertook the direction of his father's establishment. Although holding himself aloof from political questions, he became unintentionally involved in the complications of 1831, and was forced to leave his native land. He arrived at Paris unfamiliar with the French language, and succeeded in exciting the sympathies of Gay Lussac, who admitted him into his laboratory as assistant to Pelouze. After finishing a course in the École Polytechnique, he was appointed, in 1843, chemist to the porcelain manufactory at Sèvres. Soon after he received the degree of doctor of science, and in 1850, as the result of a competitive examination, was appointed to the chair of chemistry in the scientific faculty of Rennes, a position which he has since then occupied. In 1855 he was elected dean of the faculty.

As an investigator Malaguti won a prominent place in the annals of French chemistry, the period from 1833 to 1867 being especially fruitful. Devoting his attention to the theoretical dispute of the day, he laboured unweariedly in widening the region of experimental chemistry, showing himself equally at home, not only in the organic and inorganic departments, but also in technical and vegetable chemistry. In inorganic chemistry he devised methods for preparing a variety of metallic oxides, such as cuprous and chromic oxides, in the pure state, and investigated closely the properties of a number of salts and minerals. The extensive occurrence of silver in the blood, in sea-water, coal, salt, &c., as well as the most profitable means of winning the metal, formed subjects for an interesting series of papers in 1849.

In the province of organic chemistry, Malaguti rendered his chief services, his exhaustive studies into the principles of etherification and the action of chlorine on ethers and organic bodies in general being models of careful, thorough work. The enormous mass of facts which he gathered together contributed in no small degree to the establishment of the principle of substitution. Among other important researches in this department should be mentioned the discovery of methylal, the study on the action of acids on sugars, the papers on amides and nitrites, &c.

The influence of soils on the composition of plants was investigated by Malaguti in the most thorough manner, and led to the general conclusion that the constitution of the soil affected the ashy constituents of the plants, but not their physical properties. Equally important was the series of experiments on the division of inorganic matter among the various plant families, on the temperature of the soil and the air, and on the action of various compounds on living plants.

Besides these more purely scientific labours he accomplished no small amount in analytical chemistry, and made some valuable discoveries in practical metallurgy.

In addition to his numerous contributions to the periodical scientific literature, Malaguti published in 1848 "Leçons de Chimie agricole," and in 1853 "Leçons élémentaire de Chimie," a text-book highly regarded in France, and recently honoured with a new edition.

In 1855 he was elected a corresponding member of the French Academy of Science, and in 1860 he was appointed an officer of the Legion of Honour. The Academy of Turin, the London Chemical Society, and several other learned societies, numbered him among their honorary members. T. H. N.

DR. THOMAS THOMSON, F.R.S.

A SERIOUS and protracted illness had removed Dr. Thomson,—who departed this life on Thursday, April 18,—so long from any very steady participation in the progress of botanical research that, except to those old friends who cherish the memory of his more active days, his name has of late been little before the public. Few, however, have done more permanent work in descriptive botany, in which department of science his information was not only extensive, but unusually accurate, while the range of his acquirements in other branches of natural science was distinguished by a correctness of judgment which, added to no ordinary amount of general knowledge in matters of taste and literature, made him a most delightful and instructive companion. Like many others who have acquired a permanent name in science, he had the advantage of being trained under a scientific father, while his intimate acquaintance with Sir W. J. Hooker, was no small advantage, and not less the having as the constant companion of his youth, Sir Joseph Hooker.

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On his entering as assistant-surgeon in India, a great field was open to him, of which he happily availed himself. After a participation in some of the miseries of the Cabul campaign, though not actually serving in the expedition, and a narrow escape, in company with Lady Sale, of endless captivity, he was able to devote his time very much to science. He was employed in 1847 and 1848 in the Tibet Mission, a winter residence at Iskardo, a perilous journey along the portion of the Indus which runs beyond Iskardo, though, from the state of the country, he could not pursue its course to Kashmir, and the results of the previous journey gave him the opportunity of publishing a most instructive volume which, for soundness and multiplicity of information can scarcely be surpassed.

Dr. Thomson joined his friend Dr. Hooker in Darjeling in the end of 1849, after the completion of his arduous journeys in the North-West Himalaya and Tibet, and they spent the rest of the year 1850 in travelling and collecting, returning to England together in 1851. Having obtained permission from the Indian Government to distribute his botanical collections, which were equal in extent and value to those of Dr. Hooker, after taking part in the preparation of the Indian Flora, he returned to India as Director of the Botanical Garden at Calcutta. On his return to England, increasing infirmity soon made him unequal to any constant participation in the work, but up to a very few weeks before his death he was employed as examiner, his qualifications for which made him a most desirable and efficient colleague. Though in a very failing state of health, he collected last summer assiduously in the neighbourhood of Pitlochrie, and was so fortunate after three times ascending the Sow of Atholl as to rediscover the long-lost *Menziesia cærulea*. It remains only to add that his kind and affectionate disposition endeared him to all who knew him, and to none more than to the writer of this short and imperfect notice.

M. J. BERKELEY

THE GREENLAND ESKIMO

A COMMISSION was appointed by the Anthropological Society of Paris to examine the Eskimo whom M. Geoffroy St. Hilaire, the intelligent director of the Jardin d'Acclimatation has brought from Greenland. This Commission was composed of MM. Broca, Dally, Girard de Rialle, Topinard, Masard, and Bordier (*rapporteur*). The following are the details which I have given to the Society as the result of the observations made by the Commission.

The Greenlanders, whom all Paris has been to see at the Jardin d'Acclimatation, are six in number, viz., Okabak, thirty-six years; Majak, Okabak's wife, twenty-three years; their two daughters, Anna, twenty-five, and Catarina, thirteen, months; Kojank, twenty-three years; and Jokkik, forty-one years, who is recognised at once as a half-breed between Dane and Greenlander.

These Greenlanders came from Jacobshavn, on Baffin's Bay, on the west coast of Greenland, about 69° N. lat., not far from Disco Bay and Island. In that latitude the temperature in winter falls as low as – 49° C. It differs notably from that which has to be endured by other Eskimo whose habitat extends to the south of Greenland, from Labrador to Behring Strait.

Jacobshavn, although belonging to the north district of Greenland, is not, however, the most northern town; for Bessels has given, as the human habitat nearest to the pole, the town of Ita, in 78° 16′ N.; Ita appears, however to be only a summer station. At Disco Bay the sun does not rise from November 30 to January 15. It may not be useless to give a rapid glance at the surroundings in the midst of which these Greenlanders live.

The flora is rudimentary. The Greenlanders have but little wood at their command; the little they use is imported from Denmark.

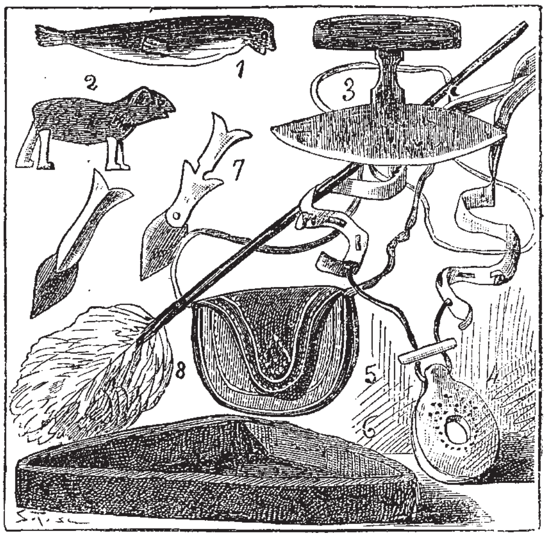

FIG. 1.—1 and 2. Toy dog and seal, cut in wood. 3. Knife to scrape fat off seal-skins. 4. Seal-skin hunting girdle with ivory medallion. 5. Seal-skin pouch. 6. Obsidian lamp. 7. Bone fish-hooks with iron points. 8. Tuft for catching vermin.

The fauna, less poor, is composed, first of all, of the seal, which constitutes the prime material of all their civilisation—food, light, heat, clothing, boat-building, various implements and utensils—the seal furnishes all. The white bear is sought for its fur, but the flesh seems to be reserved for the dogs. The reindeer is also found in Greenland. According to Dr. Hayes the reindeer is still very abundant in the interior of the land, but the Greenlanders do not make use of it either as food or as a means of locomotion. Birds are very abundant; their plumage is used as fur, and their sinews as thread.

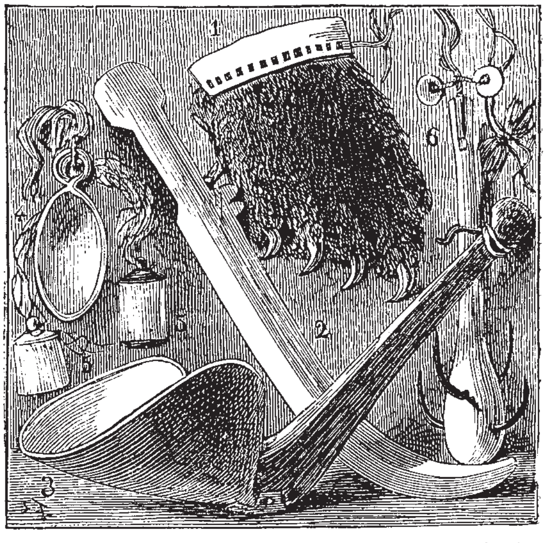

FIG 2.—1. Fur glove with bear claws. 2. Bone knife for cleaning beats. 3. Drinking-spoon. 4. Bone table-spoon. 5 Bone boxes with bundles of thread made of birds' entrails. 6. Bone hook with iron points.

But the domestic animal is the dog, which they yoke to sledges by means of a small harness of sealskin. The nine dogs which the Eskimo have brought to Paris, and

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